

War Era Story Project 2012

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Age: Not given

I was drafted when I was still in high school. I was 18 years old in January of 1943. I was allowed to finish the year in June of that year. I was sent to Camp Grant, Illinois. From there I was sent to Camp Hahn, California. We trained as anti-aircraft units for approximately one year. Much to our surprise, our entire division was transferred to Camp Carson, Colorado for combat training.

Within the next couple of months, I was sent overseas and ended up entering the invasion at D-plus-30 and assigned to Patton's Third Army, 35th division, as a replacement. The very next day, I was exposed to German sniper fire, mortar fire and screaming shrapnel. I still think back to my first day in combat; I was too scared to be a hero. I did fire at something, but had no idea of what. I was blessed with luck and the Good Lord looked over me. As replacements, we did have some advantages: Others in our unit that were hit or killed were not grieved as really close friends if we had been together for long periods of friendship, Of course, this would also be true of ourselves as replacements.

I was with the 35th div. throughout France. I was finally hit at Morhanhe, France. Again, I was lucky and the Good Lord was looking over me. German artillery hit in the middle of four of us. One person was killed, three were wounded. I was the most fortunate.

I was with the 3rd army until the end of the war, including the Battle of the Bulge; that was an entirely new and a different experience. To this day, I thank the Good Lord for all the men and women of all ages that stepped forward and willingly made unbelievable sacrifices.

I was demobilized on Jan. 31, 1946 and returned to Evanston, Illinois, where I immediately began to pursue my old high school girlfriend, who was now a sophomore at Northwestern. I was successful; we were married in 1948! Again, I was most fortunate! I was hired by a large company in Chicago and was sent to Michigan in 1941. I was in industrial sales, covering all of Michigan. I was transferred to Ohio in 1961, still in industrial sales. I retired in 1960. I lived in Greenhill for 26 years. Now I live in Fairfield. My wife Nancy is in good shape, I am in good shape, and our four young adults are successful.

From time to time I wonder why I was spared during the war! I do not have an answer.